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RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY 0154
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6814
INFO RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY 0172
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 0024
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0178
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 0178
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0213
RUEHUM/AMEMBASSY ULAANBAATAR PRIORITY 0114

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SUBJECT: OSCE,S MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP LOOKS AHEAD TO
IMPROVED COOPERATION

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The OSCE,s annual Mediterranean Conference was held December 14-15 in Cairo, Egypt. All six Med Partners (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia) attended and took an active part in discussions that focused on conflict prevention and resolution, trafficking in persons, and ways to make the partnership more valuable. The OSCE,s Mediterranean Partnership is a relatively underutilized, potentially valuable tool for engaging Maghreb and Middle Eastern States on issues such as CBMs, democratic institution-building, tolerance and non-discrimination, trafficking in persons and environmental security. An action request of Embassies in Med Partner countries and relevant Washington offices is contained in para 5.

¶2. (SBU) There was a wide variety of ideas, suggestions and recommendations emanated from the discussions at the Conference.

These included:

-- Recommendations to set up a Track II dialogue to encourage networking and informal CBMs and discuss application of the OSCE experience and acquis to the Mediterranean region .

-- In the political-military field, exploration of possible CBMs for the Mediterranean region, as well as joint projects or training programs with the Partners on transnational threats such as terrorism and illicit trafficking in drugs.

-- Cooperation between participating States, Partners, civil society and the business community on combating trafficking in persons and child exploitation is another potential area of joint activity.

-- In the econ/environmental dimension, projects to improve regional cooperation on soil erosion, desertification and water management.

-- Projects in the human dimension focusing on the role of education in preventing intolerance and promoting integration.

-- Capacity-building training for Partners encompassing areas such as anti-corruption and independence of the judiciary, based on OSCE programs in the participating States.

-- Finally, a number of participants suggested that key OSCE norm-setting documents be translated into Partner languages, in particular Arabic, Dari and Pashto.

¶3. (SBU) We believe that these types of projects would assist the Mediterranean Partners in voluntarily implementing OSCE standards that embody OSCE norms and principles in a number of key areas. While the projects listed above stem from discussion at the OSCE,s Mediterranean Conference, many could be conducted as well with the organization,s Asian Partners (Afghanistan, Australia, Japan, Korea, Mongolia and Thailand).

¶4. (SBU) These ideas on possible Partnership activities must be matched with appropriate resources. The OSCE,s Partnership Fund, created in December 2008, provides a mechanism through which we can undertake concrete projects and activities with the Partners within OSCE participating States. On the basis of a consensus decision of the 56 participating States, the Partnership Fund can also be used to fund projects to be carried out within the territory of a Partner State. The U.S. has consistently supported the efforts of the Partners to promote the OSCE,s comprehensive norms, principles and commitments in their regions, and encouraged them to take further steps towards their voluntary implementation.

¶5. (SBU) Action request: We would appreciate input from posts and Washington offices in reaction to the above specific project ideas emanating from the Mediterranean Conference. We would also appreciate comments regarding potential resources to fund them, operational considerations, and creative approaches that could be used to further wider

USG foreign policy goals in the region through the OSCE Partnership.

¶6. (SBU) POC for this issue is Julie Raschka (raschkajd@sgov.gov or raschkajd@state.gov on the unclass side).
FULLER